

when planning evacuations and notifications. Door 145 and window 149 could aid in evacuation of the building.

[00038] Although the invention has been described with respect to an illustrative embodiment, it should be realized this invention is also capable of a wide variety of further and other embodiments within the spirit and scope of the appended claims.

[00039] What is claimed is:

1. A method for preparing for and responding to a building incident comprising the steps of:
  - collecting a plurality of components of characteristic information about a building;
  - collecting relationship information about the building;
  - interrelating the plurality of components of the characteristic information through the relationship information to create linked characteristic information; and
  - providing the linked characteristic information in a pre-determined format.
2. The method as defined in claim 1 further comprising the steps of:
  - limiting access to the linked characteristic information to a set of users; and
  - validating that a potential user is a member of the set of users.
3. The method as defined in claim 1 further comprising the steps of:
  - determining contact information from the linked characteristic information; and
  - contacting individuals through use of the contact information.
4. The method as defined in claim 3 further comprising the step of automatically contacting individuals through use of electronic contact information.
5. The method as defined in claim 1 further comprising the step of selecting the pre-determined format from a group consisting of electronic format and paper format.
6. The method as defined in claim 5 further comprising the step of selecting the electronic format from a group consisting of a hand-held device, a personal computer, and an electronic network.

7. A system for preparing for and responding to a building incident comprising:
  - a collector capable of collecting characteristic information and relationship information about a building;
  - a linkage controller capable of creating links among a plurality of components of said characteristic information through use of said relationship information, said links and said characteristic information forming linked characteristic information; and
  - an operations controller capable of providing said linked characteristic information in a pre-determined format.
8. The system as defined in claim 7 further comprising an authentication subsystem capable of validating that a potential user is allowed access to said linked characteristic information.
9. The system as defined in claim 7 wherein said characteristic information is selected from a group consisting of building characteristics, utilities list, photographs, demographic information, and emergency response list.
10. The system as defined in claim 7 wherein said linkage controller comprises:
  - an information collector capable of receiving said characteristic information and said relationship information;
  - a relationship builder capable of establishing relationships among each of said plurality of components, said relationship builder capable of creating linked characteristic information from said characteristic information and said relationship information; and

an information modifier capable of allowing modification to said characteristic information and said relationship information, said information modifier capable of accessing said relationship builder to recreate said linked characteristic information if necessary.

11. The system as defined in claim 7 wherein said operations controller comprises:

an operator interface capable of receiving requests for said linked characteristic information;  
a searcher capable of retrieving the requested said linked characteristic information;  
an information formatter capable of preparing the retrieved requested said linked characteristic information in said pre-determined format; and  
an information supplier capable of sending said linked characteristic information to a requester.

12. The system as defined in claim 11 wherein said operations controller further comprises:

a dispatcher capable of retrieving a contact list from said linked characteristic information, said contact list including responding contacts and affected contacts, said dispatcher capable of tasking the responding contacts; and  
a notifier capable of retrieving said contact list, said notifier capable of informing affected contacts of the building incident.

13. The system as defined in claim 7 further comprising a structure characteristic and relationship database capable of storing information including said characteristic information, said relationship information, and said linked characteristic information.

14. A method for configuring a system for preparing for and managing an incident in a building comprising the steps of:

- verifying a floor plan for the building;
- photographing pre-determined locations parts of the building;
- collecting statistics related to the building;
- linking the photographs and the statistics to the floor plan; and
- providing the linked information in a pre-determined format.

15. The method as defined in claim 14 further comprising the step of selecting the statistics from a group consisting of number of people in the building, presence of a motion detection system in the building, presence of closed circuit TV in the building, presence of hazardous materials in the building, directions to the building, individuals related to the building, and garages with hazardous material within proximity to the building.

16. The method as defined in claim 14 further comprising the step of selecting the pre-determined format from a group consisting of electronic format and paper format.

17. A node for carrying out the method according to claim 1.

18. A computer readable medium having instructions embodied therein for the practice of the method of claim 1.